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VOLUME 1 NO. 9

northern spirit fc

"The Spirit of the Game"

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ERICSSON CUP

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northern spirit f.c.
"The Spirit of the Game"

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DREAM RUN CAN CEMENT TOP THREE SPOT

The bones and muscles will be aching, while the hamstrings and groins will be feeling the pinch - and that's only the young guns of the side.

The likes of veterans Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater may need to borrow the Sydney Cricket Ground's "medicab" to get them around the ground late in tonight's match, their fourth in two weeks.

The bad news is last Sunday's match against Sydney Olympic took a massive toll on the Spirit - forced to play for 63 minutes with only 10 men and the Perth clash was another grafting match.

But the good news is that every Ericsson Cup side has had a similar campaign and it is doubtful whether any player on the pitch will be feeling 100 per cent.

Ironically, the last three rounds of the Ericsson Cup have featured match-ups between a number of teams occupying top eight positions on the table.

Following wins against Marconi and Sydney Olympic, the Spirit were able to claim a top six spot for the first time this season.

The hard fought 1-0 win over Perth Glory, thanks to Michael Cunico's brilliant strike, saw the Spirit claim equal third spot with Adelaide City, who are also on a roll, behind tearaway leader South Melbourne and tonight's guests Sydney United.

The key now is to continue the momentum.

Having played four matches against teams higher placed on the table than the Spirit, victory tonight will give them an ideal run into the semi-final series - despite the fact that there are still 12 matches left in the Ericsson Cup competition.

The clash with Sydney United is just as vital as the games against Marconi, Olympic and Perth, and the Spirit will be keen to avenge their loss at Edensor Park back in December, where a vital defensive lapse saw them go down 1-0 to the side who currently holds down second spot on the ladder despite the fact that they are facing tougher financial restrictions than those who held shares in Christopher Skase's company Quintex.

And, it is more the pity for Sydney United, who have been responsible for developing some of the greatest names in Australian and World soccer, that their situation appears a fait accompli.

Sydney United continue to score goals and continue to win matches, despite their financial setbacks,

But, there will be no charity out on the pitch, as Sydney United would love nothing better than to thwart the Spirit's bid for first season glory, particularly as Arnold, Slater, Mark Rudan, Paul Bilokapic and Kresimir Marusic have all turned out for the club.

Bilokapic has been in sensational form and will again play a huge part - as he will shoulder plenty of responsibility with both Mark Rudan and Robert Ennes still under suspension.

Michael Cunico responded to the pressure brilliantly against Olympic and again against Perth where he scored the winning goal.

Graham Arnold had another fine game against Perth and his direction of play will again be vital.

After tonight's match the Spirit take on Brisbane Strikers in Brisbane next Saturday, Carlton at North Sydney Oval Sunday February 14, Melbourne Knights away, Adelaide City (NSO), then they have the bye, Canberra (NSO), South Melbourne (NSO), Gippsland (away) Adelaide Sharks (NSO), Newcastle (away) and the Spirit finish the season at Marconi on April 25.

While football should only be a week to week proposition at the best of times, coach Graham Arnold would be expecting wins against the likes of Melbourne Knights, Wollongong, Canberra, Gippsland, Adelaide Sharks and Newcastle.

Tough times are ahead against Brisbane, Carlton, Adelaide City, South Melbourne and Marconi but on current form the Spirit is the most improved team in the league.

GUESS

The Inside Scoop

BY DAVE LEWIS

Spirit's sport's journalist breaks the mould

There are journalists who drink too much, gorge themselves on fatty foods and suck on sackloads of cigarettes.

Then there's Phil Moss.

The Spirit utility player spent nine years as a sports scribe, but he never embraced the stereotypical lifestyle of a wayward wordsmith.

Moss was more interested in long balls than long lunches, happier to exchange passes than liquor-filled glasses.

He combined sports reporting for the Northern Beaches institution, The Manly Daily, with carving out a career in the NSW Super League with Warringah Dolphins, Central Coast and more recently Eastern Suburbs.

And now he's fulfilling the oft-held dream of many a soccer writer - he's actually being paid to play the game.

Originally hired in a dual role as a part-time professional and the Spirit's youth development officer, Moss responded to the club's long-standing injury woes by showing the cynics he's far from out of his depth on the battle fields of the Ericsson Cup.

A diligent defender or rubust midfielder, Moss has made 12 appearances for the Spirit - four as a substitute - and he is far happier playing the game rather than writing about it.

"I knew it would take injuries and suspensions to open the door for me but I don't feel I've let anybody down," says Moss.

"I think I've shown that I can handle the pressure at this level, contrary to what a lot of people thought.

"There were plenty out there who said I wasn't good enough after spending so many years in the State League.

"Hopefully they have changed their minds now."

At 27, Moss was aware time was running out on his ambition to play along soccer luminaries like Robbie Slater, Graham Arnold and Kresimir Marusic.

"I've never doubted I could play at this level," he says. "I realise I've left it a bit late," he concedes.

"But, I wasn't mentally right for the challenge - I am now."

"I realise I'm no world beater, but I always give 100 per cent, win tackles and keep it simple. I was only hired as a back-up player, so I have already exceeded expectations.

"My message to Graham Arnold would be: 'If you want a reliable man who won't let you down, then I'm your man'."

Moss found himself in the compromising position of playing in matches he was being paid to report on during his State League days.

"I suppose you could say I had the inside scoop on certain things," he laughs.

"But, I was reluctant to blow my own trumpet, so I rarely gave myself much of a mention in match reports."

He's received many a mention this season from player-coach Arnold who believes he's unearthed a rock of reliability amid the shifting sands of a side ravaged by long term injuries in their debut season.

"There were a few raised eyebrows around the place when I signed him," admits Arnold.

"But, he can play and he's proved that beyond question. He's smart, mature and well liked - the perfect man to have around in a crisis.

"He isn't affected by nerves like some of the younger players and he never lets you down."

Moss hasn't only found the step up in quality from Super League to the Ericsson Cup an eye opener, but the training regimes under Arnold have only made him a better player.

"When you go from a part-timer to full-time soccer player it is a big leap at first but it is amazing how much you improve training day after day.

"Arnold's coaching methods are brilliant and that's been reflected in our performances on the field - especially in our last three matches."

NORTHERN SPIRIT NEXT GAME:
Saturday February 6th, 7.00pm, v Brisbane Strikers at Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

NORTHERN SPIRIT NEXT HOME GAME:
NOTE: Now played Sunday February 14th, 5.00pm, v Carlton at North Sydney Oval

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Costs cramp a fully professional league

EXPANDED SEASON THE KEY

The jury remains out on the move towards full-time professionalism in this country, which has long been seen as the only way to slow down the overseas exodus of our best players.

At last count there were 101 Australians playing abroad, a figure that changes almost daily as the next planeload of hopefuls - some as young as 14 - chase the elusive dream of following in the footsteps of the likes of Mark Bosnich, Paul Okon and company.

How to stem this haemmoraghe of talent remains the single most important factor in determining the future health of the Ericsson Cup. The best players will always go, as they should.

But we need the remainder - probably 70 percent of the overseas-based contingent - to be here, playing week in and week out in Australia's premier domestic competition.

That is the way to improve the playing standards, develop the profile, and bring the crowds back. And it would help justify the expense of full-time professionalism for our local clubs.

Lowly Canberra Cosmos and newcomers Carlton were the first clubs to go full-time last season - obviously with starkly contrasting results. The Cosmos finished last, while Carlton made the grand final at their first attempt.

This season Perth Glory, Sydney Olympic and, of course, Northern Spirit have joined them. Next season Marconi-Fairfield are planning to follow suit, with South Melbourne considering their options.

The advent of the players union and the implementation of a Collective Agreement has dramatically improved wages and conditions. The existing agreement expires in June, and a new deal is in the process of being finalised. The establishment of a minimum wage is the most significant new development.

All of this, of course, creates a bigger financial burden on the clubs. For the likes of the Spirit and the Glory, their big crowds make life a lot easier. But for others the prospect of funding a playing staff for 12 months a year is a daunting one.

It is a classic Catch-22. Without the incentive of earning a full-time wage, the better players will not be encouraged to stay in Australia. And without the better players remaining here, the league - and the clubs - will struggle to generate publicity and crowds.

Olyroo skipper Brett Emerton is the perfect illustration - he is being paid well enough as a full-time footballer with Sydney Olympic to be able to afford to knock back offers from overseas, including a generous one from French side Girondins Bordeaux.

BEHIND THE MIKE with Michael Cockerill

For that reason we should applaud those clubs who have already taken the plunge, and hope they can survive until, god willing, the financial health of the league improves.

It is not easy, that's for sure.

Yet there is at least one thing that is within the control of those who run the game - the number of games played by the Ericsson Cup clubs.

A league program of 28 matches played inside eight months is clearly not enough to sustain full-time wages.

The knock-out NSL Cup competition must be revived, as should a pre-season tournament and an Asia-Pacific Cup during the off-season.

Give the clubs between 35-40 quality fixtures each year - and the income derived from them - and suddenly they have the incentive to maintain a full-time staff until the day when the big dollars from television revenue and sponsorship arrive.

Only then can we start to keep the foreign talent scouts at bay.

* Michael Cockerill is a sportswriter for The Sydney Morning Herald and a commentator for Sports Australia.

PLEASE NOTE: Spirit's home game v Carlton now played Sunday Feb 14, 5.00pm at North Sydney Oval

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ERICSSON

Robbie to the rescue

Slater engineers gutsy win over arch-rivals Olympic

To many keen Northern Spirit fans, player/coach Graham Arnold's decision to make the monumental switch from striker to the unaccustomed role of sweeper has probably added a few years to his career, such is the presence he holds in the Ericsson Cup.

But, Arnold's switch to the defensive line and fellow striker Clayton Zane's inclusion in the Olyroos squad for the series against South Korea left the Spirit with a huge hole up front.

The coach knew that young Daniel Watkins was still feeling his way in the Ericsson Cup, and perhaps it was in desperation that Arnold moved Robbie Slater up front.

While the Spirit were having trouble scoring regularly, Arnold realised Slater's experience would see him through the transition.

The first major obstacle was convincing Slater the move would work, and while Robbie admits he wasn't too keen on the switch, he did what was best for the team and the results have been sensational.

Since Slater has been the Spirit's main strike weapon, seven goals have come the side's way in two matches and Slater has been responsible for three of them.

His goal against Marconi was a pearler, and his two goals in the first half against Sydney Olympic showed the predatory instincts of one who has been poaching goals all his life.

In between the Spirit's opening two goals against Olympic, Mark Rudan was shown the red card for a tackle that had Arnold fuming - not for its viciousness nor its stupidity - but for the fact that an Olympic defender had earlier felled Slater with a tackle he considered on par with Rudan's effort on Brett Emerton.

Considering the Spirit's heavy schedule over the past two weeks, to play for 63 minutes with 10 men was not what the doctor ordered.

But the side responded brilliantly. Slater led the way up front and was aided with a brilliant second half strike by Robbie Enes, who also stood out.

Enes looked unlucky not to add a second goal to his tally later when he finished off a Spirit attacking movement but could not beat the keeper.

Arnold tirelessly held the defence firm .The coach orchestrated a sensational counter-attack down the left flank for Kresimir Marusic midway through the second half that saw Arnold latch on to the resultant cross and blast a shot into the side of the net.

Watching him struggle to get back to the play summed up how much he pushed himself to launch another attacking raid despite being a man down.

Daniel Watkins worked strongly at right back after Rudan's dismissal, Phil Moss rallied under pressure as did Michael Cunico and Paul Bilokapic was again a tower of strength.

Bilokapic figured in Slater's first goal and the big man took control in defence when Olympic pressured the Spirit time and time again.

Paul Henderson, a Spirit Point favourite, again showed his class as did Marusic and young Matthew Langdon was again in the thick of the action.

FOOTNOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER: It's easy for home ground regulars to take the local support for granted at North Sydney Oval, but travelling to Belmore Oval last Sunday was an experience in itself.

To be a part of the Olympic "cauldron" was a little intimidating, but no less intimidating than it would be for North Sydney Oval visitors, and it made one realise the valuable support and contribution the "Spirit Pointers" make.

The atmosphere was electric. The drums and chanting unbelieveable and one doubts whether any other Ericsson Cup team receives the groundswell of support away from home the Spirit receives.

Robbie Slater, who left the ground early with a groin injury, showed just how much the side appreciates their efforts when he walked 80 metres at the end of the match to applaude the "Spirit Pointers" who showed their unwavering support.

The "Spirit Pointers" deserved no less an accolade.

PLEASE NOTE: Spirit's home game v Carlton now played Sunday Feb 14, 5.00pm at North Sydney Oval

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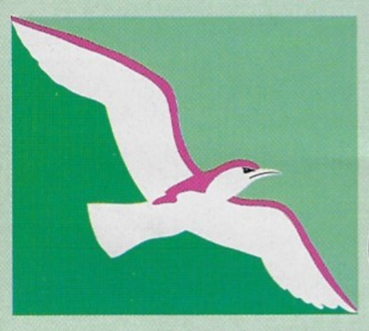

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ERICSSON CUP TABLE - ROUND 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	15	10	3	2	32	18	33
Sydney United	15	9	2	4	25	16	29
Carlton	15	8	3	4	32	17	27
Perth Glory	15	8	3	4	30	18	27
Adelaide City	15	8	2	5	24	14	26
NORTHERN SPIRIT	15	8	2	5	18	16	26
Sydney Olympic	15	7	3	5	26	21	24
Marconi Fairfield	15	7	3	5	27	26	24
Brisbane Strikers	15	6	4	5	20	18	22
Adelaide Sharks	15	5	3	7	24	25	18
Newcastle Breakers	15	5	3	7	16	22	18
Wollongong Wolves	15	4	4	7	23	29	16
Gippsland Falcons	15	3	3	9	8	27	12
Melbourne Knights	14	3	2	9	14	24	11
Canberra Cosmos	15	0	2	13	9	36	2

MATCH RESULTS - ROUND 16

- NORTHERN SPIRIT 3 (Robbie Slater 9min, 29min, Robbie Enes 54min) defeated Sydney Olympic 2 (P Cardozo 43min, 87min) at Belmore Sports Ground. Crowd: 9,151.
- South Melbourne 4 (J Anastasiadis 30min, 56min, M Curcija 73min, V Coveny 76min) defeated Gippsland Falcons 1 (A Thompson 86min) at Mobil Park, Morwell. Crowd: 3,121.
- Sydney United 1 (D Barrett 75min) defeated Newcastle 0 at Breakers Stadium, Newcastle. Crowd: 3,697.
- Carlton 2 (A Marth 14min, S Colosimo 36min) defeated Wollongong Wolves 1 (M Brooks 81min) at Brandon Park, Wollongong. Crowd: 2,626.
- Brisbane Strikers 2 (D Hughes 25min, K Wehrman 58min) defeated Marconi Fairfield 1 (Z Babic 50min) at Marconi Stadium. Crowd: 3,052.
- Adelaide Sharks 1 (J Porter 56min) drew with Canberra Cosmos 1 (A Duric own goal 12min) at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Crowd: 2,023.
- Adelaide City 2 (A Tobin 70min, B Hassell 89min) defeated Perth Glory 1 (C Boutsianis 80min) at Perth Oval. Crowd: 12,290.
- BYE: Melbourne Knights

ERICSSON CUP TABLE - ROUND 17

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	16	11	3	2	33	18	36
Sydney United	16	10	2	4	28	18	32
Adelaide City	16	9	2	5	27	14	29
NORTHERN SPIRIT	16	9	2	5	19	16	29
Carlton	16	8	3	5	32	20	27
Perth Glory	16	8	3	5	30	19	27
Brisbane Strikers	16	7	4	5	22	19	25
Marconi	16	7	3	6	29	29	24
Sydney Olympic	16	7	3	6	27	23	24
Adelaide Sharks	16	5	3	8	24	26	18
Newcastle Breakers	16	5	3	8	16	25	18
Wollongong Wolves	16	4	5	7	23	29	17
Melbourne Knights	15	3	3	9	14	24	12
Gippsland Falcons	15	3	3	9	8	27	12
Canberra Cosmos	16	1	2	13	12	36	5

MATCH RESULTS - ROUND 17

- Northern Spirit 1 (Michael Cunico 74min) defeated Perth Glory 0 at North Sydney Oval. Crowd: 17,722
- South Melbourne 1 defeated Adelaide Sharks 0 at Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne.
- Adelaide City 3 (B Armour 2, D Mori) defeated Carlton 0 at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide.
- Brisbane Strikers 2 (J Harris, R Tollenaere) defeated Sydney Olympic 1 (P Cardozo) at Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane.
- Sydney United 3 (M Sterjovski) defeated Marconi Fairfield 2 (C Gibson 2) at Edensor Park, Sydney.
- Canberra 3 defeated Newcastle 0 at Bruce Stadium, Canberra.
- Wollongong Wolves 0 drew with Melbourne Knights 0 at Brandon Park Wollongong.
- BYE: Gippsland Falcons

AVERAGE CROWD FIGURES TO ROUND 16 - TEAM HOME / AWAY

Adelaide City 31,740 /36,468
7 game average 4,534
Adelaide Sharks 22,770 /43,949
8 game average 2,846
Brisbane Strikers 35,547 /48,383
7 game average 5,078
Canberra Cosmos 32,802 /22,534
8 game average* 4,100
Carlton 28,011 /45,068
8 game average 3,501
Gippsland Falcons 20,485 /34,941
8 game average 2,560
Marconi Fairfield 37,600 /57,877
7 game average 5,371
Melbourne Knights 28,200 /32,660
7 game average 4,028
Newcastle Breakers 31,012 /42,411
8 game average 3,876
NORTHERN SPIRIT 104,406 /52,621
7 game average 14,915
Perth Glory 129,014 /43,941
8 game average 16,126
South Melbourne 54,999 /45,708
7 game average 7,857
Sydney Olympic 48,051 /51,548
8 game average 6,006
Sydney United 30,674 /48,072
7 game average 4,382
Wollongong City 25,891 /55,979
7 game average 3,698

*Note: Canberra played Melbourne Knights and Perth Glory away but these games were classed as home fixtures.

northern spirit f.c.
"The Spirit of the Game"

Ericsson Cup Results at a glance

TABLES AND RESULTS

KEY : 1-0 = match result home team - 1, away team - 0 24/1 = match played January 24

HOME ACROSS / AWAY DOWN	Adelaide City	Adelaide Sharks	Brisbane Strikers	Canberra Cosmos	Carlton	Gippsland Falcons	Marconi Fairfield	Melbourne Knights	Newc. Breakers	NORTHERN SPIRIT	Perth Glory	South Melbourne	Sydney Olympic	Sydney United	Wollongong City
Adelaide City	•	5-0	14/3	31/1	3-0	28/3	2-0	3-0	11/4	2-0	0-1	1-1	25/4	3-2	21/2
Adelaide Sharks	4/4	•	18/4	1-1	1/1	14/2	7/3	19/3	3-1	2-3	7/2	1-1	4-1	1-2	5-0
Brisbane Strikers	0-1	2-1	•	27/3	1-0	10/4	3-2	27/2	25/4	6/2	2-2	0-1	2-1	2-2	6/3
Canberra Cosmos	0-1	1-3	0-1	•	8/3	25/4	1-2	0-2	3-0	0-1	0-5*	1-3	22/2	4/4	8/4
Carlton	4-1	31/1	21/2	3-0	•	3-0	28/3	4-2	3-0	1-2	11/4	14/3	0-0	28/2	4-0
Gippsland Falcons	1-0	1-0	0-2	1-1	6/2	•	0-0	0-1	21/2	4/4	0-3	1-4	7/3	18/4	21/3
Marconi Fairfield	17/4	4-0	1-2	13/2	0-2	27/2	•	3/4	13/3	25/4	20/3	5-3	2-1	2-0	3-3
Melbourne Knights	14/2	0-1	3-2	14/3	25/4	31/1	1-2	•	28/3	21/2	1-1	0-1	11/4	0-1	1-2
Newcastle Breakers	1-0	26/2	1-0	2-1	19/3	1-2	1-2	2-2	•	16/4	3-2	12/2	5/2	0-1	2/4
NORTHERN SPIRIT	5/3	9/4	1-1	19/3	4/2	1-0	4-0	2-1	0-0	•	1-0	26/3	0-2	29/1	1-0
Perth Glory	1-2	2-1	14/2	28/2	3-0	14/3	2-2	18/4	31/1	2-0	•	2-1	28/3	3-1	0-1
South Melbourne	21/3	1-0	4/4	18/4	4-1	2-1	21/2	7/2	2-0	2-0	7/3	•	3-1	1-0	3-1
Sydney Olympic	2-1	14/3	2-1	5-0	4/4	0-0	31/1	3-0	2-1	2-3	3-1	28/2	•	14/2	18/4
Sydney United	7/2	25/4	21/3	2-0	2-1	4-0	3-2	7/3	1-1	1-0	21/2	11/4	4-0	•	2-1
Wollongong City	1-1	28/3	1-1	4-2	1-2	6/1	11/4	0-0	1-2	28/2	25/4	31/1	1-1	14/3	•

* COSMOS HOME GAMES PLAYED IN PERTH/MELBOURNE

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE RESULTS:

NORTHERN DIVISION Round 16:

Sydney Olympic 2 defeated Northern Spirit 1

AIS 2 defeated Wollongong 0

Sydney United 2 defeated Newcastle 0

POSTPONED GAMES: • Northern Spirit v Syd Olympic

Academy • Marconi v QAS • Wollongong Colts v

ACTAS • Sydney United Colts v Marconi Colts

ROUND 20 MATCH:

Marconi Fairfield 1 defeated ACTAS 0.

NORTHERN SPIRIT REMAINING HOME MATCHES 1998/99

V CARLTON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 14 - 5.00PM
V ADELAIDE CITY FRIDAY MARCH 5 - 7.30PM
V CANBERRA FRIDAY MARCH 19 - 7.30PM
V STH MELBOURNE FRIDAY MARCH 26 - 7.30PM
V ADELAIDE SHARKSFRIDAY APRIL 9 - 7.30PM

Average Home Crowds (as at Round 16):

Perth Glory 16,126	Sydney United 4,382
NORTHERN SPIRIT 14,915	Canberra Cosmos 4,100
South Melbourne 7,857	Melbourne Knights 4,028
Sydney Olympic 6,006	Newcastle Breakers 3,876
Marconi Fairfield 5,371	Wollongong Wolves 3,698
Brisbane Strikers 5,078	Carlton 3,501
Adelaide City 4,534	Adelaide Sharks 2,845
	Gippsland Falcons 2,560

PLEASE NOTE: Spirit's home game v Carlton now played Sunday Feb 14, 5.00pm at North Sydney Oval

Northern Spirit squad statistics

THIS WAY UP

KEY • Matches started s Matches as substitute
' Indicates Yellow Card " Indicates Red Card ° Indicates Goal Scored NOTE A league and Northern Spirit Appearances and Goals updated each round.

DATE	OPPONENTS	H/A	SCORE	CROWD	1.JOHN PEROSH	2.NICHOLAS PURDUE	3.EDDY BOSNAR	4.IAN CROOK	5.MARK RUDAN	6.LUKE CASSERLY	7.KRESIMIR MARUSIC	8.ROBBIE SLATER	9.GRAHAM ARNOLD	10.GABRIEL MENDEZ	11.TROY CRANNEY	12.JAMES STUBBS MILLS	13.PHIL MOSS	14.TONY PERINICH	16.DANIEL WATKINS	17.PAUL BILOKAPIC	18.PAUL WEARNE	19.CLAYTON ZANE	20.PETER BLAZINCIC	21.MICHAEL CUNICO	22.PAUL HENDERSON	23.MATTHEW LANGDON	25.ROBERT ENES	26.ADAM SNYDER	29. ADEM PORIC
9 OCT	SYDNEY OLYMPIC	H	L/0-2	18,965	•	•	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
18 OCT	PERTH GLORY	A	L/0-2	17,580	•	•	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
25 OCT	CARLTON SC	A	W/2-1	4,209	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
30 OCT	MELB. KNIGHTS	H	W/2-1	13,654	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6 NOV	WOLL. CITY WLVS	H	W/1-0	14,818	•	•	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
15 NOV	ADELAIDE CITY	A	L/0-2	4,900	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	BYE																												
27 NOV	BRISB. STRIKERS	H	D/1-1	15,862	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6 DEC	SYDNEY UNITED	A	L/0-1	6,236	•	•	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
14 DEC	CANB. COSMOS	A	W/1-0	1,704	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
20 DEC	STH. MELBOURNE	A	L/0-2	6,500	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
27 DEC	GIPPS. FALCONS	A	W/1-0	10,374	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3 JAN	ADELAIDE SHARKS	A	W/3-2	2,809	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
8 JAN	NEWC. BREAKERS	H	D/0-0	13,206	•	•	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
15 JAN	MARCONI FAIRFLD	H	W/4-0	17,507	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
24 JAN	SYDNEY OLYMPIC	A	W/3-2	9,151	s'	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
26 JAN	PERTH GLORY	H	W/1-0	17,722	s	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
29 JAN	SYDNEY UNITED	H																											
6 FEB	BRISB. STRIKERS	A																											
12 FEB	CARLTON SC	H																											
21 FEB	MELB. KNIGHTS	A																											
28 FEB	WOLL. CITY WLVS	A																											
5 MAR	ADELAIDE CITY	H																											
	BYE																												
19 MAR	CANB. COSMOS	H																											
26 MAR	STH. MELBOURNE	H																											
4 APR	GIPPS. FALCONS	A																											
9 APR	ADELAIDE SHARKS	H																											
16 APR	NEWC. BREAKERS	A																											
25 APR	MARCONI FAIRFLD	A																											
	Northern Spirit Appearances				0	1	10	4	12	13	15	14	14	6	4	4	13	0	14	14	4	14	0	14	16	10	13	2	2
	Northern Spirit Goals				0	0	0	1	2	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
	A League Appearances				31	3	16	4	67	127	73	204	192	76	202	4	13	72	15	106	4	84	121	14	26	10	13	2	8
	A League Goals				0	0	1	1	9	2	10	50	57	11	16	0	0	18	2	10	0	18	0	1	0	0	1	0	1

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KRESIMIR MARUSIC

STAR SPOT

KRESIMIR MARUSIC

Nickname:
Kresh

Position:
Midfield

Height:
177cm

Weight:
74kg

DOB:
18-1-63

Place of Birth:
Croatia-Zagreb

Previous clubs:
Carlton, Sydney United, Melbourne Knights and Croatia Zagreb

Rep honours:
Nil

Biggest influence:
None

Biggest disappointment:
Losing last year's Ericcson Cup Grand Final

Favourite overseas club:
Real Madrid

Favourite player:
Roberto Baggio

Best advice:
Work hard and be patient

Pet football hate:
Selfish players

Superstitions:
I wear good luck charm during matches

Favourite football memory:
Winning the Ericsson Cup player-of the-year award in 1997

Football ambitions:
To win as many games as possible

Hobbies/Interests:
Tennis

Favourite food:
Pasta and fish

Favourite drink:
Wine

Favourite TV show:
Anything on soccer

Favourite movie:
Rocky

Favourite music:
Funk

Four dream guests at a dinner party:
Bill Clinton, Carl Lewis, Michel Platini and Bellis Sconay

Autograph:

Mitre

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the inside that counts!!

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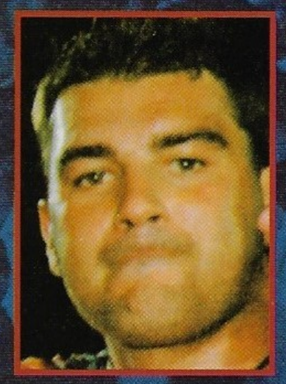
STAR SPOT

MARK RUDAN

Autograph:

MARK RUDAN



Nickname:
Rudes

Position:
Central defender

Height:
191cm

Weight:
86kg

DOB:
27-8-75

Place of Birth:
Sydney

Previous clubs:
Sydney United, AIS

Rep honours:
Australian U/20 representative

Biggest influence:
Ron Smith, Steve O'Connor

Biggest disappointment:
Injuries

Favourite overseas club:
Sampdoria

Favourite player:
Roberto Mancini

Best advice:
Listen, work hard and have respect

Pet football hate:
Losing

Superstitions:
Put my socks on before putting my boots on

Favourite football memory:
Scoring in the 1-0 win over New Zealand to qualify for the U/20 World Cup

Football ambitions:
To play for Australia and play overseas

Hobbies/Interests:
Golf

Favourite food:
Pasta

Favourite drink:
Lemon squash

Favourite TV show:
60 minutes

Favourite movie:
Shawshank Redemption

Favourite music:
Dance music

Four dream guests at a dinner party:
Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Mike Tyson and Robert Macini

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1	John PEROSH
3	Eddy BOSNAR
4	Ian CROOK
5	Mark RUDAN
6	Luke CASSERLY
7	Kresimir MARUSIC
8	Robbie SLATER
9	Graham ARNOLD
10	Gabriel MENDEZ
11	Troy CRANNEY
12	James STUBBS-MILLS
13	Philip MOSS
14	Tony PERINICH
16	Daniel WATKINS
17	Paul BILOKAPIC
18	Paul WEARNE
19	Clayton ZANE
20	Peter BLAZINCIC
21	Michael CUNICO
22	Paul HENDERSON
23	Matthew LANGDON
25	Robert ENES
26	Adam SNYDER
29	Adem PORIC

NORTHERN SPIRIT v SYDNEY UNITED

NORTH SYDNEY OVAL — FRIDAY JANUARY 29, 7.30PM

SPIRIT SQUAD

1	John PEROSH
3	Eddie BASNAR
4	Ian CROOK
5	Mark RUDAN
6	Luke CASSERLY
7	Kresimair MARUSIC
8	Robbie SLATER
9	Graham ARNOLD
10	Gabriel MENDEZ
11	Troy CRANNEY
12	James STUBBS-MILLS
13	Phillip MOSS
14	Tony PERINICH
16	Daniel WATKINS
17	Paul BILOKAPIC
18	Paul WEARNE
19	Clayton ZANE
20	Peter BLAZINCIC
21	Michael CUNICO
22	Paul HENDERSON
23	Matthew LANGDON
25	Robert ENES
26	Adam SYDER
28	Jack SOBZYCK
29	Adem PORIC

UNITED SQUAD

1	Andrew CREWS
2	David BARRETT
4	Velimir KUPRESAK
5	Richard PLESA
6	Joe VRKIC
7	Jacon BURNS
8	Walter ARDONE
9	Mile STERJOVSKI
10	Nathan DAY
11	Steve BERRY
14	Joe CALETA
15	Danny TOWNSEND
17	Michael SANTALAB
18	David MITCHELL
19	Joel GRIFFITHS
20	Barney SMITH
26	Ante MORIC
28	Peter BENNETT

G3 Communications

SYDNEY UNITED

MICHAEL COCKERILL'S PLAYER PROFILE

1. ANDREW CREWS: Has waited patiently for his chance after many years as understudy to Socceroo keeper Zeljko Kalac, who is now in Holland. Unsteady start to the season, but now back to his best.

2. DAVID BARRETT: Veteran fullback who made his name during a long spell at Sydney Olympic before crossing town last season. Playing perhaps the best football of his career.

4. VELEMIR KUPRESAK: Talked out of retirement during the off-season by the coaching staff, and has rewarded that faith with another consistent campaign. One of the strongest aerial defenders in the league.

5. RICHARD PLESA: Has to be picked for the Socceroos sooner rather than later. Great positioning, strong in the tackle, and a superb long-range passer. International-class sweeper.

6. JOE VRKIC: Another Socceroo candidate. Took a while to cement a spot with the Pumas, and was sent to Wollongong and Collingwood on loan before returning last season to make the position his own.

7. JACON BURNS: Under-23 international midfielder who has thrived under Mitchell's coaching. Out of form during the early rounds, but has come back better than ever. Aggressive, committed and always looking to get forward.

8. WALTER ARDONE: Capped only once by the Socceroos, but still among the best midfielders going around. Played with plenty of clubs, but now more consistent than ever.

9. MILE STERJOVSKI: Promising young striker, an AIS graduate whose goals in this, his first full season in the league, have earned him a call-up for the Olyroos.

10. NATHAN DAY: Returned recently from injury, is slowly getting back to fitness. The club's major off-season recruit (from Adelaide Sharks), can play in midfield and up front.

11. STEVE BERRY: Veteran midfielder who has rejected approaches from NSL clubs in the past to remain in the NSW state league. Had to endure plenty of stick from the fans early in the season, but has won them over with his wholehearted displays.

14. JOE CALETA: Journeyman striker or attacking midfelder, now in the veteran class. Still reasonably quick, and usually has an impact when coming off the bench.

15. DANNY TOWNSEND: Manly-Warringah product who was overlooked by the Spirit, and now making an impact with the Pumas in his first season in the league. Lightning fast.

17. MICHAEL SANTALAB: Versatile defender, currently in a rich vein of form and recently scored his first goal in the league.

18. DAVID MITCHELL: A legend, in the Arnold-Farina class. Spent a decade overseas with a variety of clubs including Glasgow Rangers, Feyenoord and Chelsea. Former Socceroo striker who still has plenty of pace, and an inspiration to the team.

19. JOEL GRIFFITHS: Two of his brothers in the youth teams at the Spirit, but opted to go to Sydney United where his father Alan is on the coaching staff. A revelation in his first season. Lively, quick and brave, has scored some timely goals.

20. BARNEY SMITH: Reserve goalkeeper, whose chances have been limited. Son of former AIS head coach, Ron Smith.

26. ANTE MORIC: Hugely talented player now at the crossroads of his career. Can play in midfield or out wide, once touted as a Socceroo candidate. Has lost his way in recent years, but recently given another chance by Mitchell, and is ready to accept it.

28. PETER BENNETT: Former youth international who made his NSL debut a decade ago, but spent several years out of the game with a blood disorder. Made a triumphant comeback last season, and again one of the Pumas most consistent players.